

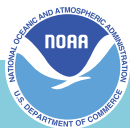


NATIONAL MARINE
SANCTUARIES TM

**Sanctuary Advisory Councils
National Report
2003**

March 2004

U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Ocean Service
National Marine Sanctuary Program



Executive Summary

The National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) is the nation's Federal marine protected area program. Established by the National Marine Sanctuaries Act in 1972, the NMSP is marking thirteen years of working with Sanctuary Advisory Councils (Councils) with this national annual Council report. There are currently ten Councils established for the thirteen sanctuaries, as well as the Council for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve/Proposed Sanctuary.

The NMSP considers the heightened role of its Councils to be a mark of its continuing evolution as a maturing program. The NMSP is deeply committed to providing support and optimizing utilization of Councils now and in coming years.

2003 and early 2004 were marked by a series of great accomplishments for the NMSP's Councils. Several Councils were heavily involved in efforts to review and revise management plans for their sites. The Cordell Bank, Gulf of the Farallones, and Monterey Bay Councils continued to be immersed in the joint management plan review for their sites, volunteering countless hours on working groups to develop recommendations for their site's revised management plans. The Gray's Reef Council was instrumental in the public review and comment on their Draft Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which was released in October 2003. The Stellwagen Bank Council worked diligently to prioritize issues identified by public scoping meetings and established twelve working groups to assist in developing action plans and management strategies.

The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Council continues to do double duty and play an integral role in both the operation of the Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve and the designation process to consider a sanctuary in that region. The Council helped develop and approved the draft Final Reserve Operations Plan and submitted comments on the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's Supplemental Fishery Management Plan Amendments.

The Councils had a number of accomplishments that were not related to management plan review or designation. The Cordell Bank Council is pursuing formation of permanent working groups to assist in sanctuary efforts. The Channel Islands Council remained closely involved with the implementation of marine reserves, assisting in the development of new educational and monitoring strategies. The Florida Keys Council provided a public forum for the Navy to explain to the public the plan for the first maintenance dredge of Key West Harbor since the 1960s. The Gray's Reef and Stellwagen Bank Councils participated in communications workshops designed by NMSP staff. The Gulf of the Farallones Council was very involved with the joint boundary issue, voting on numerous issues associated with the boundary and calling for a public meeting to review placement of the boundary. The Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale Council initiated, supported and many members participated in a workshop on vessel-whale strikes. The Monterey Bay Council played a key role in the process to identify and select a site for the Sanctuary's Visitor Center. The Olympic Coast Council created an Education/Outreach Subcommittee to work with staff on developing materials for the upcoming management review process and other outreach initiatives. The Thunder Bay Council established three new working groups, for a total of five, to provide input on issues from volunteers to mooring buoys. The NMSP also received input on reauthorization of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act from a majority of the Councils.

Early 2004 saw the completion of the fourth annual Council Chairs and Coordinators Meeting. This year's meeting was hosted by the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary in Savannah, Georgia on February 23-26. The meeting included an informal discussion session

with Council Coordinators from across the NMSP, a similar session with the Council Chairs from each site, presentation of a case study for each Council, and input from the Chairs on national issues including: NMSP policy topics, reauthorization of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, and activities of cruise ships in sanctuaries.

The NMSP looks forward to continuing its support and cooperation with its Councils in 2004 and beyond. The NMSP expects to have a number of accomplishments for 2004, including the creation of up to three new Councils for the *Monitor*, Fagatele Bay, and Flower Garden Banks sanctuaries, a council session at the September Leadership Team meeting, and the planning of the fifth annual Chairs and Coordinators meeting, scheduled for February 2005 in San Francisco, California.



Council Coordinators gathered for their first ever training session in October 2003, hosted by the Thunder Bay Sanctuary in Alpena, Michigan..

Introduction

The National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) is the nation's federal marine protected area program. Established by the National Marine Sanctuaries Act in 1972, the NMSP is marking thirteen years of working with Sanctuary Advisory Councils (Councils) with the publication of this national annual Council report.

The NMSP considers the increasing use and support of Councils to be a mark of its continuing evolution as a maturing program. The depth of the NMSP's commitment to Councils is embodied in its Council policy statement:

The NMSP regards the involvement of communities and the development of a stewardship ethic as vitally important to successfully protect sanctuary resources. One key way the NMSP has achieved this involvement is the formation of Sanctuary Advisory Councils.

Sanctuary Advisory Councils bring together members of a diverse community to provide advice to the sanctuary manager (delegated from the Secretary of Commerce and the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere) on the management and protection of the sanctuary, or to assist the NMSP in guiding a proposed site through the designation process.

The NMSP is committed to the full support, utilization, and enhancement of Councils at all sanctuaries. In order for Councils to achieve their full potential, the NMSP will:

- ◆ At each site, provide sufficient support to allow Councils to operate efficiently and effectively;
- ◆ Provide support and guidance from the national office to help Councils operate efficiently and at a basic level of consistency across the system;
- ◆ Promote coordination and communication among Councils and among sanctuary staff that work closely with Councils; and
- ◆ Develop training programs appropriate to Council officers and members, and sanctuary managers and staff.

There are currently eleven Councils established for the thirteen operational and one proposed site within the NMSP network (see Table I).

Over the last few years, the NMSP has determined there are a number of primary roles Councils play:

- ◆ Serve as a liaison between the sanctuary and its community, disseminating information about the sanctuary to the various constituencies of members and bringing the concerns of constituents and the public to sanctuary staff;
- ◆ Assist in creating a dialogue to examine various sides of an issue and a place for mediation;
- ◆ Identify potential partners and constituent groups with which the sanctuary should be working and forge relationships;
- ◆ Help identify and resolve issues and conflicts, including emerging issues of which the sanctuary might not be aware;
- ◆ Review and provide input on sanctuary plans, proposals, and products, including prioritizing issues;
- ◆ Help support friends' groups;
- ◆ Participate in sanctuary events, activities, and programs;

- ◆ Provide information to individuals or groups interested in establishing a friends' group or foundation to support a sanctuary;
- ◆ Provide technical and background information on issues facing the sanctuary; and
- ◆ Validate the accuracy and quality of information that the sanctuary uses for decision-making purposes.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Highlights for 2003

2003 and early 2004 were marked by a series of great accomplishments for the NMSP's Councils. Several Councils were heavily involved in efforts to review and revise management plans for their sites. The Cordell Bank, Gulf of the Farallones, and Monterey Bay Councils continued to be immersed in the joint management plan review for their sites, volunteering countless hours on working groups to develop recommendations for their site's revised management plans. The Gray's Reef Council was instrumental in the public review and comment on their Draft Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which was released in October 2003. The Stellwagen Bank Council worked diligently to prioritize issues identified by public scoping meetings and established twelve working groups to assist in developing action plans and management strategies.

The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Council continues to do double duty and play an integral role in both the operation of the Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve and the designation process to consider a sanctuary in that region. The Council helped develop and approved the draft Reserve Operations Plan and submitted comments on the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's Supplemental Fishery Management Plan Amendments.

The Councils had a number of accomplishments that were not related to management plan review or designation. The Cordell Bank Council is pursuing formation of permanent working groups to assist in sanctuary efforts. The Channel Islands Council remained closely involved with the implementation of marine reserves, assisting in the development of new educational and monitoring strategies. The Florida Keys Council provided a public forum for the Navy to explain to the public the plan for the first maintenance dredge of Key West Harbor since the

Table 1: Existing and Developing Councils

Site	Year SAC Established	Total # Members	Primary Focus for 2003
Florida Keys	1991	19	Operations
HI Humpback Whale	1992	31	Operations
Monterey Bay	1994	24	MPR
Stellwagen Bank	1992	21	MPR
Olympic Coast	1995	20	Operations
Thunder Bay	1997	16	Operations
Channel Islands	1998	23	MPR; Marine Reserves
Gray's Reef	1999	11	MPR
Northwestern HI	2001	25	Operations; Designation
Gulf of the Farallones	2001	11	MPR
Cordell Bank	2001	6	MPR
Fagatele Bay	in development	?	N/A
Monitor	in development	?	N/A
Flower Garden Banks	in development	?	N/A

*Management Plan Review

1960s. The Gray's Reef and Stellwagen Bank Councils participated in communications workshops designed by NMSP staff. The Gulf of the Farallones Council was very involved with the joint boundary issue, voting on numerous issues associated with the boundary and calling for a public meeting to review placement of the boundary. The Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale Council initiated, supported and many members participated in a workshop on vessel-whale strikes. The Monterey Bay Council played a key role in the process to identify and select a site for the Sanctuary's Visitor Center. The Olympic Coast Council created an Education/Outreach Subcommittee to work with staff on developing materials for the upcoming management review process and other outreach initiatives. The Thunder Bay Council established three new working groups, for a total of five, to provide input on issues from volunteers to mooring buoys. The NMSP also received input on reauthorization of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act from a majority of the Councils.

Report of 2004 Council Chairs and Coordinators Meeting

This year's Council Chairs and Coordinators Meeting was hosted by the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary in Savannah, Georgia on February 23-26. The meeting was attended by representatives from nine of the NMSP's eleven Councils, staff from the eleven sites that have Councils, Flower Garden Banks sanctuary, and the NMSP's headquarters office. Observers from the National Park Service, Canada and Australia attended the meeting as well. There were 35 participants in all (see Table 2).

The meeting began on Monday, February 23 with an informal discussion session with Council Coordinators from across the NMSP. Topics discussed during the session included: information subject to release under the Freedom of Information Act during member selection; the parameters for holding a Council retreat; the Working Group established to examine the merits of a national advisory-type body; the proposed communications resource book; the council session held at the January Leadership Team meeting; and a variety of "housekeeping" issues.

Tuesday, February 24 was spent on national reports, case studies, international presentations and a communications session. The Deputy Director of the NMSP, Michael Weiss, provided a welcome and introduction to the meeting. Karen Brubeck outlined a number of national Council activities, including completion of the first-ever Council Coordinator training session and preparation of the second annual national Council report (this document). A number of council Chairs presented and discussed their case studies, highlighting a major achievement or project the Council tackled in the last year. Elizabeth Moore discussed the NMSP's decision to develop a more formal structure for international activities, highlighting a number of projects already underway. Bruce Kingston, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority summarized their Representative Areas Program and the role their advisory bodies played in the process. Parks Canada representatives, Gail Jackson and Cindy Giardetti, discussed the Lake Superior National Marine Conservation Area Initiative and the part their communities play in their process. Michael Murphy held a session to discuss the investment the program is making in communications and obtained the council members' input on a proposed council communications resource book.

Wednesday, February 25 the balance of the Chairs presented their case studies. The case studies from the Councils covered a wide range of subjects, including whale-vessel strikes, fishing, marine research areas, constituent reports, marine zoning, management plan review, water quality, cruise ships, maritime heritage, marine reserves and boundary issues. This wide range of topics demonstrates the diversity of issues and concerns being addressed by

Table 2: Participants, National Chairs and Coordinators Meeting

Participant	Affiliation
Daniel J. Basta	NMSP Director, NMSP Headquarters
Keeley Belva	Coordinator, Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale NMS
Reed Bohne	Manager, Gray's Reef NMS
Karen Brubeck	National Council Coordinator, NMSP Headquarters
Nicole Capps	Coordinator, Monterey Bay NMS
Gary Davis	National Park Service
Barbara Emley	Chair, Gulf of the Farallones NMS Council
Susan Farady	Secretary, Stellwagen Bank NMS Council
April Fendley	Administrative Coordinator, Gray's Reef NMS
Rowena Forest	Coordinator, Cordell Bank NMS
Cindy Giardetti	Parks Canada
Michael Hanrahan	Business Seat, Channel Islands NMS Council
Stephanie Harlan	Chair, Monterey Bay NMS Council
Gail Jackson	Parks Canada
Bruce Kingston	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Terrie Klinger	Chair, Olympic Coast NMS Council
Gail Krueger	Communications/Outreach Coord, Gray's Reef NMS
Elizabeth Moore	Acting CPPB Chief, NMSP Headquarters
Michael Murphy	Communications Branch, NMSP Headquarters
Michael Murray	Coordinator, Channel Islands NMS Council
George Neugent	Chair, Florida Keys NMS Council
Moani Pai	Coordinator, Northwest. Hawaiian Islands CRER
Andrew Palmer	Coordinator, Olympic Coast NMS
Aida Pettegrue	National Council Liaison, NMSP Headquarters
Jean Prevo	Coordinator, Thunder Bay NMS/UP
George Schmahl	Manager, Flower Garden Banks NMS
Mary Jane Schramm	Coordinator, Gulf of the Farallones NMS
Carol Shafto	Chair, Thunder Bay NMS/UP Council
Becky Shortland	Coordinator, Gray's Reef NMS
Jim Sullivan	Gray's Reef NMS
Nathalie Ward	Coordinator, Stellwagen Bank NMS
Michael Weiss	NMSP Deputy Director, NMSP Headquarters
Reginald White	Whale Watching Seat, HIHWNMS Council
Fiona Wilmot	Coordinator, Florida Keys NMS
Judy Wright	Chair, Gray's Reef NMS Council

each sanctuary and its Council. G.P. Schmahl, Flower Garden Banks Sanctuary Manager described where the site is in the process to establish an advisory council. This year, for the first time, the Chairs also participated in an informal discussion session.

As the NMSP continues to build its system identity and become more proactive in nature, it has become increasingly clear that national policy or guidance will be necessary on a number of issues. Therefore, for the second year in a row, on Thursday, February 26, the NMSP held discussions and obtained input from the Chairs on issues national in scope including: NMSP policy topics, reauthorization of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, and activities of cruise ships in sanctuaries. The meeting was open to the public and comment was given by The Ocean Conservancy, Bluewater Network and the International Council of Cruise Lines. The information from this session will be added to that already collected by Program for reauthorization, and provide continued guidance on a number of policy topics.

In general, the Chairs agreed that cruise ships, aquaculture and alternative energy are the highest priority issues the program needs to consider. They suggested the Program revisit acoustics as a priority for policy and the issue of cultural protocols/practices should be elevated. The Chairs provided a number of specific thoughts in regards to cruise ships and agreed to the following consensus statement: *Council Chairs urge the NMSP to explore regulatory and voluntary strategies which address issues of cruise ship discharge within the sanctuaries and to report back to sanctuary managers and councils.*

Conclusions and Future Priorities

2003 was an exciting year for the NMSP's Councils and this year's meeting was a success by all accounts. Participants have begun to link the maturing of the program with a parallel maturing of the councils, support provided to the councils, and the annual meeting. So what is in store for 2004?

In 2004, the NMSP will continue to improve and enhance the national support provided to its Sanctuary Advisory Councils by:

- ◆ completing and printing the 2nd annual Sanctuary Advisory Council National Report (this document);
- ◆ holding a council session at the September Leadership Team meeting;
- ◆ updating the Council Member Directory;
- ◆ developing and updating a council page for the internet site;
- ◆ continuing to update the intranet site for Coordinators;
- ◆ producing monthly council information bulletins; and
- ◆ establishing a Working Group to investigate the merits of a national advisory body.

The NMSP will also continue to provide information to the Councils on national policies, reauthorization and other issues. Finally, next year's Council Chairs and Coordinators Meeting is planned for February 2005, to be co-hosted in San Francisco by Cordell Bank and Gulf of the Farallones sanctuaries.

Day One of the fourth Chairs and Coordinators Meeting, hosted by the Gray's Reef Sanctuary in Savannah, Georgia, February 2004.



Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

Site Profile

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary is located off the coast of Ventura and Santa Barbara, California and encompasses 1,658 square miles of the waters surrounding San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Anacapa, and Santa Barbara Islands. A fertile combination of warm and cool currents results in a great variety of plants and animals, including: large nearshore forests of giant kelp, flourishing populations of fish and invertebrates, and abundant and diverse populations of cetaceans, pinnipeds, and marine birds. The site was designated in September 1980 and began a review of its management plan in 1999.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Profile

The Council was established in 1998 to enhance opportunities for public involvement in sanctuary management and to support the process of management plan revision. The Council has twenty voting members, ten representing various local, state, and federal government partners and ten representing a variety of community interests (conservation, education, research, fishing, tourism, recreation, business, industry, and the public at-large). The Council meets bi-monthly and has formed a number of active working groups, including those focused on conservation, fishing, education and business.

Major Achievements and Milestones

In April of 2003, a network of ten marine reserves (no take zones) and two marine conservation areas (limited take zones) went into legal effect within 175 square miles of state waters within the Sanctuary. This milestone capped a long history of involvement and work by the Council and their working groups. Throughout 2003, the Council remained closely involved with the implementation of the marine reserves, assisting in the development of new educational and monitoring strategies. Additionally, the Council has been closely involved with a second phase (Phase 2) of the marine reserves process, in which a possible expansion of the initial state marine reserves is being considered (as originally envisioned by the Council and its working groups).



The blood star (Henricia leviuscula) is particularly fond of rocks encrusted with sponges and bryozoans and can live as deep as 400 meters (photo: Laura Francis).

Regarding the state reserve network of marine reserves, a milestone for the Council was realized in 2003 by shifting from the previous multiple-year planning and design efforts, which came with a high degree of controversy and pressure, into a new mode of advising on reserve implementation, education and monitoring. This shift has placed the Council in a new role, one focused on helping to raise awareness of the marine reserves, providing a public forum for understanding how the reserves are being implemented (e.g., enforcement), and offering more limited input into the technical aspects of developing biological and socioeconomic monitoring programs.

The Council's Ad Hoc Group on Enforcement provided advice on the development of a new brochure aimed at increasing awareness about the rules and regulations in place within the sanctuary and at the Channel Islands National Park. This advice was incorporated into the final brochure "Protecting Your Channel Islands".

Council Recommendations and Sanctuary Decisions

The Council made a number of important recommendations that helped shape the sanctuary's role in implementation of the state marine reserves within the sanctuary and the Phase 2 process to consider additional marine reserves. Additionally, discussions were held and educational presentations were provided on a number of other important issues that did not result in Council recommendations.

In addition to marine reserves, several topics were explored in 2003 through a series of presentations, discussions, and focused attention by working groups. These issues included clean boating practices, marine acoustics, large vessel traffic, proposed offshore liquid natural gas terminal development, and an ongoing NOAA study of regional marine biogeography. The Council received regular updates on the management plan revision process, which was characterized in 2003 by staff work to finalize draft documents in preparation for agency clearance and public release. The Council awaits their next opportunity to provide recommendations on the management plan in 2004.

In January, upon learning that NOAA was considering merging environmental review processes for management plan revision and the marine reserves process, the Council discussed the pros and cons of such an approach. The Council then voted 14-2-0 (two abstained) to write a letter to Dan Basta advising that the management plan revision and the phase two marine reserves processes be kept separated, and detailed their reasons for the recommendation. In response to this recommendation, the NMSP met with senior policy advisors at NOAA and congressional committee staffers interested in this matter. The Council's advice was shared with all parties involved in the discussions. In the end, a NOAA decision was made to keep the review processes separate, as the Council had recommended.

In the summer of 2003, the Council was a key participant in the public scoping comment period for the environmental review process to consider marine reserves establishment within the sanctuary. Two of the Council's working groups (business and conservation) organized meetings to collect scoping comments. Many Council members also attended public scoping hearings held at locations throughout Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. At the July Council meeting, the entire Council provided input to the sanctuary in an exercise that generated a lengthy list of substantive scoping comments that were agreed to by a consensus of all seats in attendance. These important comments focused mainly on process-related suggestions. Upon receipt of these written comments, sanctuary management and staff shared them with NMSP leadership and the Pacific Fisheries Management Council. The

Council's comments have helped shape the environmental review process and documentation, and they are updated on the progress at every meeting.

In May the Council's Sanctuary Education Team provided recommendations to the Council on how the sanctuary should communicate with various constituencies about the science and rationale behind the marine reserves network. This advice was a "long term strategy" complement to short term recommendations the Team provided in November of 2003. The Council unanimously approved the long-term educational strategies. Staff provides reports to the Council on progress made implementing these strategies.

In November the Council voted to write a letter to the new California Governor's office requesting that resources be maintained for Department of Fish and Game personnel and programs needed to support monitoring and management the state marine reserves within the sanctuary. A response to the letter is expected in early 2004.

The Council discussed reauthorization of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act and produced a list of recommendations, agreed to by a consensus of the Council, for the NMSP headquarters office.

Major Administrative Changes

Three appointments to non-governmental seats were made throughout the year (business, tourism, education) and the representation was changed for five government seats (National Park Service, NOAA Fisheries, Minerals Management Service, US Coast Guard, and California Department of Fish and Game). The Council commented twice on the configuration of seats, and in response some changes were made by the sanctuary manager and approved by the NMSP. In 2004, these changes will introduce members appointed to a new recreational fishing seat and a Chumash culture seat, and the number of public at-large seats will be reduced from three to two, resulting in a Council consisting of 21 voting seats. The Council Charter was renewed in 2003, reflecting the seat changes and providing a number of small modifications aimed at providing consistency with NMSP guidelines.

A new Business Working Group was established in 2003 and met twice. The Business Working Group was formed to encourage and achieve stronger communication between sanctuary management and the business community that utilizes and benefits from sanctuary waters. Toward this goal, the Business Working Group focuses on: 1) examining how businesses are affected by issues relating to the sanctuary; 2) examining how businesses rely on the health of sanctuary resources; and 3) developing potential marketing appeal for the sanctuary and business activities that occur within sanctuary waters.

Several Council discussions were held in 2003 that focused on improving the operations of the Council. A subcommittee was formed in March to consider input from the Council and develop a set of recommendations aimed at clarifying specific procedural matters. The end result was a Council-adopted set of protocols that compliment the Charter. These general operational guidelines cover eight areas: 1) preference for use of a consensus approach; 2) limited role of Robert's Rules of Order; 3) advance noticing of Council meeting action items; 4) preference for avoiding day-of-the-meeting surprise votes and actions; 5) voting and absentee clarifications; 6) importance of including minority views in Council advice; 7) clarifications about Council letter writing; and 8) the role of alternates.

Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary

Site Profile

Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, designated in 1989 and encompassing 526 square miles, protects a very productive offshore seamount on the west coast, where the combination of ocean conditions and undersea topography creates a highly diverse marine community. The Bank rises to within 115 feet of the sea surface with water depths of 6,000 feet only a few miles west. The prevailing California Current flows southward along the coast, and the upwelling of nutrient rich, deep ocean waters stimulates the growth of organisms at all levels of the marine food web. It is a destination feeding ground for many marine mammals and seabirds. The site is located 60 miles northwest of San Francisco, California.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Profile

The Council was established in 2001 to support the joint management plan review process currently underway for the sanctuary and its neighboring sanctuaries, Gulf of the Farallones and Monterey Bay. The Council has members representing education, research, conservation, maritime activity, and community-at-large. The government seat is held by a representative from the National Marine Fisheries Service. The Council holds four regular meetings per year, and one in the summer for an annual retreat.

Major Achievements and Milestones

In 2003, members of the Council committed hundreds of hours to participating on working groups to develop recommendations for the sanctuary's revised management plan. Many of the working groups met bi-weekly to discuss issues relating to research, education, maritime activities, conservation, and the community at large. Council members reviewed recommendations and provided valuable input to move the process forward. The Council is also pursuing the formation of permanent working groups and panels to assist in research, education and outreach efforts for the sanctuary.

Juvenile rockfish swarm over the invertebrate-covered pinnacles of Cordell Bank. (photo: Cordell Bank Expeditions)



Council Recommendations and Sanctuary Decisions

The Council participated in the management plan review process which has led to a draft plan of recommendations and regulations for the management of Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary. Council members have also provided comments on reauthorization of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act.

Major Administrative Changes

Brian Mulvey replaced Jim Bybee for the government seat position on the Council. Brian is a representative from the National Marine Fisheries Service. Rowena Forest was hired as the Advisory Council Coordinator.

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Site Profile

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary was designated in 1990 and encompasses 3,801 square miles of waters around the archipelago of the Florida Keys. The sanctuary supports one of the most diverse assemblages of underwater plants and animals in continental North America. Although best known for its coral reefs, the shallow nearshore waters contain interdependent marine habitats that include fringing mangroves, seagrass meadows, hardbottom regions, as well as patch and bank reefs. This complex marine ecosystem is the foundation for the tourism and commercial fishing based economies that are so important to Florida.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Profile

The oldest of the Councils, it was established in 1991 and has nineteen members covering the wide spectrum of interests in the Florida Keys community, including boating, conservation, cultural resources, diving, education, commercial and recreational fishing, government, research, tourism and the community-at-large. The Council meets bimonthly and currently has three working groups: the Large Vessel Working Group, Ballyhoo Working Group and the Biscayne National Park Fisheries Management Plan Working Group. Meeting dates for 2004: February 17, April 20, June 15, August 17, October 19, and December 14.

Major Achievements and Milestones

The Council provided a forum for the Navy to explain to the general public the potentially controversial plan for the first maintenance dredge of Key West Harbor since the 1960s.

The Council provided a public forum at several meetings for NOAA Fisheries and stranding network stakeholders to update the local community on the mass stranding of a pod of pilot whales in the Keys and the subsequent rehabilitation and release of five animals.

The Ballyhoo Working Group enabled a significant compromise to be arrived at between the Islamorada Charter Boat Association and sanctuary staff regarding the issuance of baitfish permits in certain Sanctuary Preservation Areas.

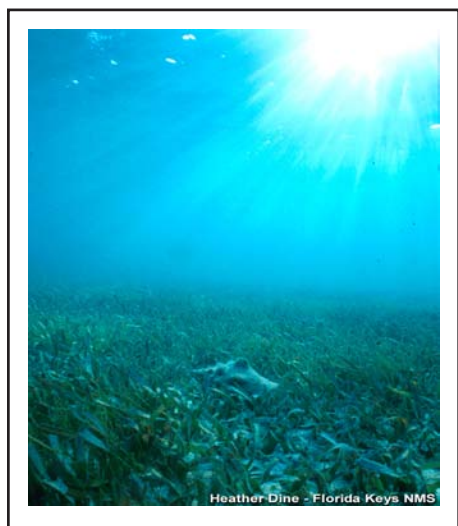
The Council hosted members of the Monroe County Tourist Development Council at an introduction to the Nancy Foster Environmental Center in Key West. The TDC is providing funds for interpretive displays at the Center. The Council also hosted Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation commissioners at a reception at their November meeting at Hawk's Cay. Both events were funded by Sanctuary Friends of the Florida Keys.

Council Recommendations and Sanctuary Decisions

The Council considered and provided recommendations to the Sanctuary Superintendent on a number of different issues and projects including, but not limited to:

- ◆ Supported raising boater registration fee by \$9.25 in order to generate additional revenue to address water quality issues.

- ◆ Recommended sanctuary management communicate to the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council that all fish traps in their jurisdiction be banned immediately.
- ◆ Urged the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to maximize efficiency of both the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary mission and the Homeland Security mission by seeking funds appropriated to implement homeland security measures to improve enforcement and patrol capacity within the sanctuary.
- ◆ Sent a letter in support of the Florida Guides' Association's proposal to the Florida Legislature to revise existing laws on poaching to require charges to be filed that reflect the severity of the alleged crime.
- ◆ Passed a resolution, supporting a ten parts per billion phosphorus water quality standard for the Everglades; supporting the implementation deadlines contained in the Everglades Forever Act of 1994; urging that those responsible for Everglades pollution should be financially responsible for the cleanup; and urging that changes to Everglades management and implementation be undertaken only after consultation with relevant agencies.
- ◆ Passed a resolution, opposing house bill number 1005 and urging protection of the water management districts' authority to reserve water for protection of fish and wildlife and ecosystem restoration
- ◆ Wrote a letter to Dr. William Hogarth expressing strong concern about the proliferation of wild dolphin tour operators in Key West and requesting that he work with the sanctuary and other parts of NOAA to investigate methods of dolphin viewing tours for the protection of the wildlife.
- ◆ Passed numerous motions regarding concern over the dumping of effluent from Piney Point phosphate facility into the Gulf of Mexico.
- ◆ Recommended that sanctuary management establish a sanctuary working group to assist Biscayne National Park (BISC) with their efforts to establish a fishery management plan.
- ◆ Recommended that sanctuary management expedite the implementation of Phase I of the Ballyhoo Working Group's Recommendation.



*The seagrass community of South Florida is the largest seagrass meadow in the world. Of the seven species of seagrass in Florida, three are prominent in the Keys: turtle grass (*Thalassia testudinum*), manatee grass (*Syringodium filiforme*), and shoal grass (*Halodule wrightii*). (photo: Heather Dine - Florida Keys NMS)*

- ◆ Recommended that the drift vial research project to ascertain the dispersal of Queen Conch larvae in the Pourtales Gyre proposed by Dr. Bob Glazer and Gabriel Delgado of Florida Marine Research Institute be permitted.
- ◆ Recommended sanctuary management adopt changes to the National Marine Sanctuaries Act proposed by the National Marine Sanctuaries Act Reauthorization Working Group.

Major Administrative Changes

Several new members and alternates joined the Council:

- ◆ Jack Curlett, Citizen-at-Large, Upper Keys
- ◆ Jeremy Smith, Alternate
- ◆ Mark Klingbeil, Recreational Fishing
- ◆ Jim Trice, Alternate
- ◆ Brad Simonds, Charter Fishing/Sports Fishing.

In addition 14 Council seats were advertised and 16 alternate seats were advertised. Recommendations for nomination from the 64 applicants have been forwarded to state partners in Tallahassee. The Governor and Cabinet will then forward recommendations to Dan Basta for a final decision.

Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary

Site Profile

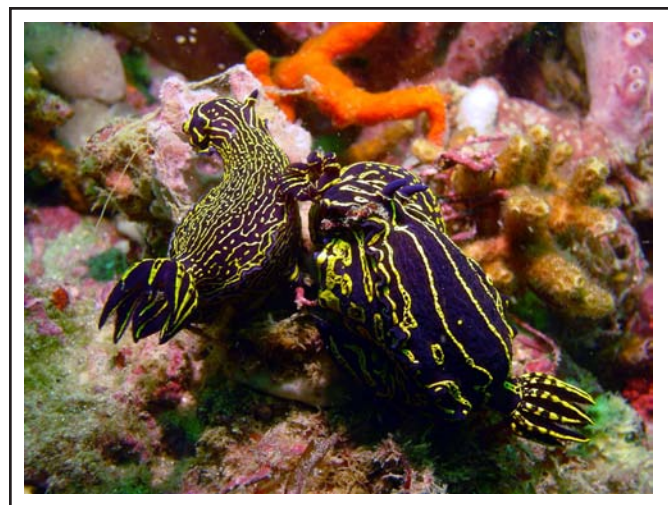
Gray's Reef is one of the largest nearshore rocky reefs in the southeastern United States. The sanctuary is located 17.5 nautical miles off Sapelo Island, Georgia. It was named in recognition of Milton B. Gray, a taxonomist and curator at the University of Georgia Marine Institute who studied the area in the 1960s. The sanctuary boundary protects 16.68 square nautical miles of open ocean and hard bottom. Although it is estimated that 75 percent of the hard bottom is covered by sand, rock outcroppings scattered throughout the sanctuary form a complex habitat of caves, burrows, troughs, and overhangs some 60 to 70 feet below the Atlantic Ocean's surface. The rocky ridges and their associated attached organisms are commonly referred to as "live bottom habitat," a habitat of particular biological importance given the extensive sands that cover most of the broad continental shelf. The rocky bottom is carpeted with corals, sponges, and other invertebrates. This flourishing ecosystem attracts mackerel, grouper, black sea bass, angelfish, and a host of other fishes. Loggerhead sea turtles, a threatened species, also use the sanctuary year-round for foraging and resting, and the reef is also close to the winter calving ground for the highly endangered Northern right whale. The sanctuary is one of the most popular sport fishing and diving areas along the Georgia coast.


Sanctuary Advisory Council Profile

The Council is one of the smallest, at eleven members covering conservation, education, research, recreational fishing and diving, and federal and state agency partners. The Council was formed in 1999 in support of the site's management plan review which began the same year. The Council meets as necessary or approximately every 3-4 months.

Major Achievements and Milestones/Council Recommendations and Sanctuary Decisions

The review and revision of the sanctuary's 1983 Management Plan has been the primary focus of the Council over the last four years. Council members helped to design and run scoping meetings early in the process and put considerable time and effort into analyzing issues and strategies for inclusion in the new plan. The Draft Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement was released in October 2003 and Council members have been instrumental in public review and comment on the document. In preparation for release of the plan, Council members participated in a special communications workshop designed by NMSP staff.





With a final management plan expected in mid-2004, the Council will be transitioning to focus on implementation and evaluation of the plan. Chief among the actions identified in the plan is investigation of a marine research area in the sanctuary. The Council will assist the sanctuary in exploring this concept by establishing a working group to examine the needs, goals and objectives of such an area.

Major Administrative Changes

Amendments to the Council Charter were proposed and approved in late 2002 to allow staggering of member terms. As a result two to three Council seats will be open each year.

Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary

Site Profile

Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, situated along the California coast north and west of San Francisco, includes nurseries and spawning grounds for commercially valuable fish species, at least 36 species of marine mammals, and 15 species of breeding seabirds. One fifth of California's harbor seals breed within the sanctuary. The Farallon Islands are home to the largest concentration of breeding seabirds in the contiguous United States. The sanctuary boundaries include the coastline up to mean high tide, protecting open ocean and an number of lagoons and estuaries, bays and beaches for the public. The sanctuary was designated in 1981 and covers 1,255 square miles. Its proximity to the San Francisco Bay Area's human population of nearly 8 million makes the Farallones sanctuary one of the most complex sites in the Program to administer. The sanctuary has worked to balance the needs of its wildlife resources with the needs of the public.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Profile

The Council was established in 2001 to support the joint management plan review process currently underway for the site and its neighboring sanctuaries, Cordell Bank and Monterey Bay. Among the smallest of the eleven Councils, this Council has members representing education, research, business/industry, and the community at large, as well as the site's primary partner, the National Park Service. The Council meets frequently as part of the management plan review process; its members have participated in a number of working groups to help develop new management strategies for these California sanctuaries.

The advisory council also plays a critical role in facilitating dialogue between sanctuary management and the area's many and varied user groups and constituents. In addition to raising constituent concerns with sanctuary management, the council is responsible for carrying the messages, programs, accomplishments and issues of the sanctuary out to the groups each member represents.



A nineteen-foot white shark cruises the waters around Southeast Farallon searching for its next meal of an unsuspecting juvenile elephant seal. October is the peak month for shark attacks in this region. The sharks are drawn to the Farallones because of the large concentration of immature elephant seals which haul out annually to molt. (photo: Scot Anderson)

Major Achievements and Milestones

In 2003, the Council held four regular meetings and a two-day retreat. In addition, the Council also participated in a specially convened meeting in early December 2003, a boundary workshop to address issues surrounding a proposal to move the joint boundary with Monterey Bay sanctuary north to the San Mateo County line.

The Council passed a number of resolutions at both regular meetings, at the Management Plan Review retreat and the specially convened boundary workshop. February 24 at Elkus Ranch in Half Moon Bay; April 22 at the Foundation for Deep Ecology, Sausalito; July 21-22, a two-day "retreat" meeting at The San Francisco Zen Center, Sausalito; on September 25 at Fort Point, Presidio of San Francisco; and on November 20 at the Lighthouse Hotel in Pacifica. In addition, the Council met as part of an Ad Hoc Boundary Workshop December 4 at Half Moon Bay concerning the joint boundary with Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

In addition to regular meetings, council members took part in nine working groups concerning the Management Plan Review, each group met between eight and ten times. The Council called for a public meeting to review the placement of the existing Farallones southern boundary, which lies north of the Golden Gate. A significant part of Farallones sanctuary waters extend offshore south of the current joint boundary with Monterey. Since 1992 the Farallones sanctuary has co-managed and conducted monitoring of both the offshore and coastal areas of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. In December, NMSP Director Dan Basta convened a public meeting to receive community input and explore the ramifications of such a change. Daniel J. Basta and staff presented information evaluated to date, conducted a panel discussion to address specific questions and concerns, and listened to Council and public concerns. Public input was solicited through January 5, 2004.

The Council will continue to advise the Sanctuary Manager on action plans and final management plan throughout the year. Five meetings and a retreat will be held to address JMPR issues and focus council's efforts on other aspects of the sanctuary. Several vacancies on the council will be filled in the first part of the year. Also, a field trip will be sponsored to acquaint council members more fully with the various habitats of the sanctuary.

Council Recommendations and Sanctuary Decisions

At these various meetings, the council voted on several important issues: to move the joint boundary with Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary south to Point Ano Nuevo; to reject the Boundary Modification Report which was issued by an Internal Team without Working Group advice; to separate the boundary issue from the Joint Management Plan Review; and to request of the Monterey Bay NMS Advisory Council assist in establishing a liaison between the two councils.

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary

Site Profile

The Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary lies within the shallow (less than 600 feet), warm waters surrounding the main Hawaiian Islands and constitutes one of the world's most important humpback whale habitats. Scientists estimate that two-thirds of the entire North Pacific humpback whale population migrate to Hawaiian waters each winter to engage in breeding, calving, and nursing activities. The continued protection of humpback whales and their habitat is crucial to the long-term recovery of this endangered species. The sanctuary was designated in 1992 and encompasses 1,370 square miles.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Profile

Formed in 1992, the Council is one of the older Advisory Councils and also the largest at 31 members. Representatives cover all facets of the sanctuary community, including conservation, education, research, fishing, whale watching, tourism, recreation, shipping, business/industry, Native Hawaiian, individual islands, the community at large, and a number of state and federal partners. The Council has formed three subcommittees for education, research, and conservation that meet on a frequent basis; the whole Council generally meets bimonthly.

Major Achievements and Milestones

Throughout the year Council members engaged in the following opportunities to enhance their understanding of the diverse activities that occur in the Sanctuary:

- ◆ A tour hosted by the U.S. Navy of the *U.S.S. Lake Erie* and the *U.S.S. Honolulu*, a ship and submarine both home-ported at Pearl Harbor. The purpose of the tour was to learn about the U.S. Navy's waste management practices.
- ◆ A presentation from representatives of Northwest Cruise Association on agreements with the State of Hawai'i regarding waste management practices for cruise ships operating in waters surrounding Hawai'i.



*Humpback whales are very protective of their calves and prefer the shallow areas around the islands of Maui, Molokai and Lanai, possibly due to calmer water conditions.
(photo: Dave Matilla - NMFS Permit #807)*

- ◆ A presentation on two different proposals to establish open-ocean aquaculture ventures in sanctuary waters.
- ◆ A presentation by Cates International on an existing open ocean aquaculture venture on Oahu.
- ◆ A presentation on the newly established Hawai'i marine mammal-stranding program.
- ◆ A presentation to understand underwater and whale acoustics by Dr. Whitlow Au with the University of Hawaii Marine Mammal Research Program.
- ◆ A workshop on Management Needs to Minimize Vessel Collisions with Whales in the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary and other Marine Sanctuaries (September 3-5, 2003 Wailea, Maui).

The first Council retreat was held November 13-14, 2003 in Honolulu, Hawai'i, and included work with a facilitator to devise a strategic plan for FY04.

In addition, members of the Council participated in training made available to sanctuary volunteers on humpback whale behaviors and biology. The hands-on experience helped Council members to assist with development of sanctuary education and outreach materials.

The Council continued efforts to provide advice to the sanctuary on the development of outreach materials aimed at educating boaters in Hawai'i about the sanctuary and issues regarding humpback whales and its habitat.

The Council also focused efforts to help the sanctuary define its role in supporting naturalist training for marine interpreters.

Council member Terry O'Halloran was selected to serve on the Commerce and Interior Departments' Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee.

Other Council members provided presentations to the public for the Sanctuary Lecture Series, offered volunteer services to support the sanctuary at community events, and participated in a variety of sanctuary efforts.

Council Recommendations and Sanctuary Decisions

In 2003, the Council supported efforts for the Workshop on Management Needs to Minimize Vessel Collisions with Whales in the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary and other Marine Sanctuaries that was held in Wailea, Maui September 3-5, 2003. The workshop focused on issues surrounding the potential impact of vessel-whale collisions and best possible practices to minimize and avoid future collisions. Several Council members participated on the workshop planning committee and provided presentations at the workshop.

The Council has also been a strong supporter of Structures of Populations, Levels of Abundance, and Status of Humpbacks (SPLASH), an international cooperative research effort aimed at better understanding humpback whales in the North Pacific.

Council members have continued to support, and are eagerly awaiting, the establishment of a field office in Kona on the island of Hawai'i.

This year the Council participated in discussions and presentations regarding many pertinent topics, including inter-island high-speed ferries, impacts of Navy training exercises on humpbacks, noise effects on humpback whales in the Hawaiian Islands, and the assessment of significant threats to the humpback whale population.

The Council also looked at water quality issues relating to cruise ships, as well as issues surrounding the growing number of aquaculture farms in the Hawaiian waters.

Major Administrative Changes

The Council planned and held a retreat on November 13-14, 2003 in Honolulu, Hawai'i. It was well attended by both council members and sanctuary staff. The Council worked with a facilitator and the retreat resulted in a strategic plan for FY04. This time also allowed council members and sanctuary staff to network and get to know one another better. The Council plans to make this an annual event.

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

Site Profile

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary was designated in 1992 as the nation's largest sanctuary, spanning over 5,300 square miles of coastal waters off central California. Within its boundaries are a rich array of habitats, from rugged rocky shores and lush kelp forests to one of the deepest underwater canyons in North America. These habitats abound with life, from tiny plants to huge blue whales. With its great diversity of habitats and life, the sanctuary is a national focus for marine research and education.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Profile

One of the older Councils, this Council was established in 1994. It is also one of the largest, with 24 members covering such diverse interests as conservation, education, research, fishing, diving, tourism, recreation, harbors/ports, business/industry, agriculture, the community at large, and regional, state, and federal agency partners. The Council meets bimonthly and has four working groups (conservation, education, research, and business and tourism) that meet more frequently. The Council focuses both on providing advice on sanctuary operation and is also extensively involved in the joint management plan review process currently underway for the sanctuary and its neighboring sanctuaries, Cordell Bank and Gulf of the Farallones.

Major Achievements and Milestones

Agriculture Primary representative Dick Nutter, Sanctuary Agriculture Water Quality Coordinator Katie Siegler, and Coordinator for the Central Coast County Farm Bureaus Dawn Mathes gave a presentation on the Agricultural Water Quality Plan for the Six County Farm Bureau Coalition, involving over 500 farmers, and affecting approximately 97,200 acres of crops and land.

Research Coordinator Andrew DeVogelaere and other members of the research team gave a presentation on recent accomplishments by the research team. The presentation included many of the different research cruises that took place over the summer.

Sea otters are early morning risers. Before the sun comes up, they start their daily feeding which requires that they consume about a quarter of their body weight in food each day. (photo: Kip Evans)



Council Recommendations and Sanctuary Decisions

Joint Management Plan Review

Sean Morton updated the Council on the JMPR activities at each meeting. At the June 26th and 27th meeting, presentations were made to the Council on the 27 major topics in the report submitted to the Council. Sanctuary staff answered Council questions regarding the action plans.

On July 30th, the Council held a public comment period. They heard from 102 members of the public and also received written public comment. Fifteen topics were discussed on July 31st ranging from Wildlife Disturbance to Harbors and Dredge Disposal. The Council provided recommended modifications to the action plans and forwarded them to staff to incorporate into the final action plans that will be used as a foundation for the Draft Management Plan.

The Council was unable to reach consensus on some elements of the Motorized Personal Watercraft and Marine Protected Areas action plans. They sent these action plans back to the working groups and asked them to meet again and bring back their recommendations to the Council at a later meeting.

At the October 3, 2003 meeting, the Council reached consensus that there was no need to make any modification to the Motorized Personal Watercraft proposed action plan for private rescue groups to be allowed at Mavericks in San Mateo County.

At the December 5, 2003 meeting, the Council reached consensus to accept the Marine Protected Areas Working Group action plan as written. The action plan provides a framework for evaluating marine protected areas and continued work by the working group.

The Council heard from Dan Haifley, recreation primary, and other members of the Council who were in attendance at the December 4, 2003 boundary meeting held by the NMSP. The Council, by consensus, agreed to send a letter to the NMSP, with a copy to the Gulf of the Farallones Council, expressing their concerns with the administrative costs associated with a change in the boundary, as well as the possible loss of the statutory ban on oil and gas associated with the Monterey Bay sanctuary. The Council urged the NMSP to explore alternatives to a boundary change.

Planning and Research Consultants Bill Blake and Bob Bailey gave a presentation on Phase I of the study of a Sanctuary Visitor's Center at the April 4, 2003 meeting in Big Sur. The sites they selected for further study were the Monterey Depot Site near Fisherman's Wharf, Seacliff State Beach, the Santa Cruz Boardwalk area, and the Fun Spot near the Santa Cruz Wharf. On August 1st, the Planning and Research Consultants presented Phase II of the study of the Sanctuary Visitor's Center. The Council expressed a need to have the facility on the north end of the bay and recommended choosing a site from the three Santa Cruz sites: the Santa Cruz City Boardwalk, the Fun Spot and the Seacliff State Beach. The Fun Spot was chosen by NMSP staff as the location for the Sanctuary Visitor's Center.

Other Issues

Nick Papadakis, Executive Director of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, gave an update on the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail, the brochure was distributed, and Jen Jolly, Sanctuary Education Specialist, gave a history of the planning process and identified future steps for completion of the Trail. The Council passed a motion supporting the Sanctuary Scenic Trail resolution.

The Council supported a resolution brought to the group by the Conservation Working Group. It recommended the development and adoption of a regulation in the sanctuary, including working with relevant agencies, to prohibit harmful discharges. It recommended the design of an education program for the benefit of cruise line passengers and crew that would highlight the unique protected resources of the sanctuary. Representatives from the cruise ship industry were invited to the meeting, but did not attend.

The Council discussed the “white paper” released from NOAA Headquarters on fishing. Holly Price, Sanctuary Resource Coordinator, discussed the statutory authority of the NMSP as outlined in the 1984 amendments to the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, and indicated that the “white paper” did not contain new positions.

The Council supported a motion to send a letter to the Secretary of Commerce Don Evans, NOAA Undersecretary Vice Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher, and National Marine Sanctuary Director Dan Basta. The letter stated that the Council felt the “white paper” would make it more difficult for the sanctuary to work successfully with the fishing community, and that it did not want the “white paper” to replace or supersede the language found in the sanctuary designation documents. It also stated that it wanted to be involved in reviewing and clarifying the fishing language in the management plan through a public process involving stakeholders.

The Council voted to send a letter to Dan Basta, Director of the NMSP, urging him to increase the allocation of general schedule government positions to the sanctuary and/or increase funding so that contractors at the sanctuary can be provided benefits. The Council felt this was needed to attract quality staff members, retain them, and provide a stable work force for the NMSP.

The Council discussed proposed changes to the Charter and Protocols and recommended changes, which were sent to NMSP for consideration.

A subcommittee was formed to bring a recommendation to the Council at a future meeting for a process to consider the current representation of the Advisory Council and if it should be changed.

The Council agreed by consensus to send a letter to Bill Douros, Superintendent, with their comments on reauthorization of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. The Council suggested an increase in the authorized appropriations by at least 10% per fiscal year, a substantial increase in the number of permanent federal employees and authorizing language to allow support for the Councils, including meals during meetings.

Major Administrative Changes

The Council's membership changed with Mike Laffen selected as the new Citizen At-Large member (primary) and Meg DeLano (alternate). Secretary Dan Haifley (Recreation primary representative) was elected to this position for another year. Tourism alternate Monty Criss resigned because he changed jobs and moved from the area.

Dave Vincent, California State Parks representative and Michael Bekker, Tourism alternate were sworn in and welcomed at the June meeting.



*Hawaiian monk
seal in the NWHI.*

Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Reserve/Proposed Sanctuary

Site Profile

The expansive coral reef ecosystems of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands encompass an array of natural, cultural, and historic resources unique to Hawai'i, the United States, and the world. The coral reefs are the foundation of ecosystems that host distinctive assemblages of marine mammals, fish, sea turtles, birds, algae, and invertebrates. Federally protected species include the endangered Hawaiian monk seal and threatened green sea turtle, several resident cetacean species and millions of migratory seabirds. The coral reefs and lands that support these species represent an amazing biological evolution that includes one of the highest rates of marine endemism found in the world's oceans. These diverse natural resources are complemented by the area's rich cultural and historical significance. Archaeological sites and artifacts on Mokumanamana and Nihoa demonstrate usage and inhabitation of the area by early Hawaiians and oral histories document continued access to marine resources into the present day. Native Hawaiian cultural access voyages to the islands in recent years are breathing new life into the historical connection of all the islands of the Hawaiian Archipelago. The area played a role during early European exploration of the archipelago, the Pacific whaling era, as well as a pivotal role in the World War II including the Battle of Midway, considered to be the most decisive U.S. victory and the turning point of the Pacific war. The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands were declared a Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve by Executive Order in 2000 and are presently being considered as a National Marine Sanctuary through a designation process that began in 2001.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Profile

This Reserve Advisory Council was established in 2001 to provide advice on the operation of the Reserve and the sanctuary designation process. Twenty-five members represent a broad spectrum of interest groups, including conservation, education, research, recreational and commercial fishing, tourism, Native Hawaiians, and the community at large, as well as ten state and federal agency partners. The Council generally meets bimonthly.

Major Achievements and Milestones

The Council has had another busy year and provided advice on both Reserve operations and sanctuary designation. Three two-day meetings and two one-day meetings, including one on a neighbor island, were held. These meetings resulted in a substantial list of recommendations to the NMSP and NOAA (see discussion below). The two major achievements of the Council included voting unanimously to approve a draft text version of the Draft Reserve Operations Plan and submitting substantial comments on the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's Supplemental Fishery Management Plan Amendments relating to their Coral Reef Ecosystem, Precious Corals, Bottomfish and Pelagics Fishery Management Plans.

Council Recommendations and Sanctuary Decisions

Among the major resolutions passed by the Council were:

- ◆ Comments submitted on the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's Supplemental Fishery Management Plan Amendments;

- ◆ Development of nautical charts requested from the Secretary of Commerce to include latitude and longitude coordinates delineating the boundaries of the Reserve Preservation Areas to aid with enforcement;
- ◆ Allocation of an additional one million dollars to the reserve's annual budget requested to insure adequate funds for surveillance of the reserve and enforcement of reserve measures, including the hiring of an enforcement officer to serve on the reserve staff;
- ◆ Recommendation submitted on hiring a full time staff person to serve as the Native Hawaiian Cultural Resource specialist for the reserve;
- ◆ Report requested from NOAA Enforcement on the status of efforts to use Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) to enforce Executive Orders 13178 & 13196;
- ◆ Clarification requested from the U.S. Coast Guard regarding the enforceability of Executive Orders 13178 & 13196;
- ◆ Clarification requested from the National Ocean Service regarding the status of fisheries in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands after the adoption of Executive Orders 13178 & 13196;
- ◆ Clarification requested from NOAA on the federal government's ability to enforce Executive Orders 13178 & 13196;
- ◆ Report requested from the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding research conducted on the lobster and bottomfish fisheries;
- ◆ Report requested by a NOAA specialist to discuss all International Maritime Organization possibilities for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands; and
- ◆ Approval submitted on the draft text version of the Draft Reserve Operations Plan.

Major Administrative Changes

In 2003, the Council: selected new members and alternates, elected new Council leadership, and added two new subcommittees. The first, a Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives Subcommittee, was created to help refine language that would become the vision, mission, goals, and objectives for the proposed sanctuary. The other, a Fishing Issues Subcommittee, will help to review and discuss the issues related to fishing for the proposed sanctuary.

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary

Site Profile

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary spans 3,310-square miles of marine waters off the rugged Olympic Peninsula coastline, from Cape Flattery to the mouth of the Copalis River, and extending 25 to 50 miles seaward. The sanctuary covers much of the continental shelf and several major submarine canyons, and protects a productive upwelling zone—home to rich marine mammal and seabird faunas, diverse populations of kelp and intertidal algae, and thriving invertebrate communities. The sanctuary is also rich in cultural resources, with over 150 documented historical shipwrecks and the vibrant contemporary cultures of Makah, Quinault, Hoh, and Quileute Nations. The sanctuary was designated in July 1994.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Profile

The Council was established in 1995 and has twenty-one members, including sixteen members representing conservation, education, research, fishing, tourism, harbors/ports, community at large, adjoining MPA's, and the four Native American tribes of the region. Five ex-officio, non voting seats represent the sanctuary's federal partners. The Council meets bimonthly. The Council has three standing committees – the Executive committee, the Resource Protection Committee, and the Education/Outreach Committee to assist the work of the Council. In addition, there are three working groups—research, marine conservation, and marine safety that provide additional support and information to the Council and sanctuary.

Major Achievements and Milestones

In January, the Council created an Education/Outreach Subcommittee. The Committee will work with sanctuary staff on developing materials for the upcoming management plan review process and will also work on other outreach initiatives and programs that might be generated by the Council. In March, the Council held a workshop/retreat to examine ways in which the Council could improve operations and better utilize the energy and interests of the alternates. This yielded a set of six recommendations that were then adopted at the next meeting in September. In the fall, the Council's Marine Conservation Working Group

*Northern sea lions
(Eumetopias jubatus)
use haul-outs on many
offshore rocks and
island. (photo: Steve
Fisher)*



finished work on a report concerning the use of marine zoning in intertidal areas and forwarded it on to the members of the Council for consideration at their January 2004 meeting.

The Council also received briefings on the following issues:

- ◆ A presentation by Assistant Manager George Galasso and Education Coordinator/ Outreach Coordinator Bob Steelquist on the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Long-range Facilities Plan. This included a look at visitor facilities in Kalaloch and Neah Bay as well as plans for a permanent site for the main office and an interpretive center in Port Angeles.
- ◆ A briefing by the Commanding Officer of Naval Air Station Whidbey Island on Navy operations within the sanctuary. The W237 Range Complex encompasses most of the sanctuary extending shoreward to 3 miles. Within the entire range complex, the Navy can conduct a variety of activities including live-firing, underwater vehicle testing, acoustic detection testing, anti-submarine warfare activities, and hull integrity testing.
- ◆ A September briefing by the U.S. Navy on a Pacific Northwest Range Extension Proposal that would expand the range of underwater testing activities from the present Quinalt Underwater Testing Range to the entire W237A Operating Area. This would encompass most of the southern half of the sanctuary and include a beach landing/launching site for unmanned underwater vehicles.
- ◆ George Galasso, Assistant Sanctuary Manager, gave a presentation on current enforcement policies and activities within the sanctuary as well as future opportunities for strengthening enforcement. There will be increased on-the-water presence due to the stationing of several National Marine Fisheries Program officers near the sanctuary. Improvements in overflight monitoring and enhanced vessel tracking will be researched in the coming year.

Council Recommendations and Sanctuary Decisions

The Council drafted and adopted a letter in support of U.S. Coast Guard proposed rulemaking on Penalties for Nonsubmission of Ballast Water Management Reports. This rulemaking would replace the current voluntary reporting program that has not proved to include enough vessels. This letter was sent to the Sanctuary Superintendent who forwarded it on to the Coast Guard.

The Council honored Makah Tribe members Kirk Wachendorf, Jeannine Bowchop, Theresa Parker, and Shane Bowchop for their participation in a cooperative effort between the Tribe and sanctuary staff to create and implement a highly successful Makah Interpretive Program.

The Council drafted and adopted a set of recommendations for changes in the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. National Program staff sought input from Advisory Councils on improvements and needed changes. The Council developed 8 recommendations which it ranked in order of priority. These included lengthening the time between management plan reviews, better recognition of the role of tribes in the act, and strengthening permitting requirements, among others. The Council voted to send a letter to the Superintendent to be forwarded to the Program Director.

The Council drafted and adopted a letter outlining the scope of issues it would like the U.S. Navy to consider when proceeding with developing a draft environmental impact statement in relation to the Proposed Pacific Northwest Range Extension Proposal. The issues raised in

the letter included a number of concerns about impacts of operations on marine mammals and other sea life, as well as interruptions to other uses of the waters by native and non-native commercial fishers, as well as other recreational uses. This letter was sent to the Superintendent who forwarded it on to the Navy.

The Council noted that the Washington State Legislature passed and the Governor signed a bill creating 5-year funding for the stationing of a rescue tug at Neah Bay for approximate eight months of every year. Previously the Council had sent a letter to the Governor and State legislative leaders urging provision of long-range funding. The passage of this funding marked a significant milestone in the decade-long effort to station a rescue tug at the mouth of Juan de Fuca Strait.

Major Administrative Changes

The Council seated new members and/or alternates for the Research, Conservation, Tourism, Marine Business, and U.S. Navy seats. The Council voted to recommend creation of a non voting seat for the Northwest Straits Commission, a citizen/Federal/State partnership initiative to halt the decline of the marine resources in the Northwest Straits area. The sanctuary and the Northwest Straits Conservation Initiative share a common boundary just west of Neah Bay at Koitlah Point. The Council also constituted an Education/Outreach Subcommittee.

Many species of birds visit the Sanctuary throughout the year, including summer visitors like these greater shearwaters (Puffinus gravis). A long-distance migration takes them to the southern hemisphere where they breed during the northern winter. (photo: Dann Blackwood, USGS)



Dann Blackwood, USGS

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary

Site Profile

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, designated in November 1992, sits at the mouth of Massachusetts Bay between Cape Ann and Cape Cod. The 842-square mile sanctuary encompasses mud-filled basins, rock ledges and boulder fields, and the gravel and coarse sand bank, which was formed by the retreat of glaciers from the last Ice Age. The bank's position at the mouth of Massachusetts Bay forces an upwelling of nutrient-rich water from the Gulf of Maine—leading to high productivity and a multi-layered food web that supports a wealth of marine life including various marine mammal species, several endangered or threatened sea turtles and sea birds, and various commercial fish species. The sanctuary is also rich in cultural resources with over 10 documented shipwrecks.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Profile

The Council was originally established in 1992, and then reformed in October 2001 to support the management plan review process. The Council has 21 members encompassing the wide spectrum of interests in the region. The fifteen voting seats represent various facets of the community including conservation, education, research, fishing, whale watching, recreation, business/industry, and the community at large. The remaining ex-officio seats represent the sanctuary's state and federal partners. The Council generally meets four times a year and established twelve working groups in fall 2004.

Major Achievements and Milestones/Council Recommendations and Sanctuary Decisions

The Council has successfully organized itself while getting up to speed on management plan review process and supporting the sanctuary through the facility renovation. The Council has sent a representative to every National Chair and Coordinator's meeting and fully participated in developing recommendations to the NMSP. Throughout 2003, the Council was focused on management plan review. The Council participated in the prioritization of issues identified by the public scoping meetings, and established 12 working groups to assist in developing action plans and management strategies for the sanctuary.

Working groups include site characterization, ecosystem-based management and ecosystem alteration, public outreach and education, water quality, marine archeology, compatibility determination, inter-agency cooperation, administrative capacity, and marine mammal issues including vessel strikes, entanglement and behavioral disturbance.

The Council had a number of accomplishments not related to the management plan review:

- ◆ Participated in the Leadership Team meetings hosted by the Stellwagen Bank sanctuary in September.
- ◆ Participated in facilitation and communication training offered to staff and Council members by the NMSP.
- ◆ Participated in Annual Advisory Council Chair and Coordinator meeting.
- ◆ Provided comments on NMSA Reauthorization.
- ◆ Revised and updated the Council Charter.

This was a formative year to stimulate Council participation and engender cohesive Council support.

Major Administrative Changes

The resignation of the Chair, Bill Amaru, was given at the June meeting. The Council elected new officers, selecting John Williamson (Citizen At-Large) as Chair, Sally Yozell (Citizen At-Large) continues as Vice Chair, and Susan Farady (Conservation) was elected as Secretary. Nathalie Ward continues her second year as Council Coordinator.

Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary/Underwater Preserve

Site Profile

Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve, designated in October 2000, boasts an impressive array of underwater cultural resources including shipwrecks. The area contains a nationally significant collection of an estimated 160 shipwrecks that spans over two centuries of Great Lakes shipping history. The site is 448 square miles in area and located in northern Lake Huron, near Alpena, Michigan.

Sanctuary Advisory Council Profile

The Council was established in 1997 and has fifteen members (and fourteen alternates) all representing facets of the sanctuary community, including education, recreation, fishing, diving, tourism, cultural resources, economic development, and the community at large. Five seats represent local community governments. The Council meets once every two months, with informal coffees and lunches scheduled for non-meeting months. Working groups meet as needed. In 2003, the Council met formally six times. The Council Chair also attended the Annual Advisory Council Chair and Coordinator Meeting.

Major Achievements and Milestones

One of the 2003 Council goals was to learn more about Thunder Bay's shipwrecks and sanctuary issues. At each meeting, time was reserved for a special presentation. These included presentations by Mary Enstrom, National Volunteer Coordinator, on the national volunteer program; Dr. John Jenson of Mystic Seaport on Great Lakes shipwrecks; Sanctuary Historian Pat Labadie on Great Lakes maritime history; Sanctuary Archaeologist Wayne Lusardi on the summer 2003 shipwreck documentation; and Chief Brad Adams of U.S. Coast Guard Station Alpena on the effort to bring a full Coast Guard station to Alpena.

In the summer of 2003 the sanctuary deployed 10 mooring buoys at shipwreck sites. The Mooring Buoy Working Group took a major role in proposing the mooring buoy design and implementation. This was a major achievement for the protection of sanctuary resources. Council members assisted sanctuary staff with the documentation of several shipwrecks sites in Thunder Bay. The location information and photographs of archaeological features helped with sanctuary research and archaeological site plan development.

The bow of the wreck Grecian, one of the shipwrecks of the TBNMS.



Members of the Council volunteered in events such as the Maritime Festival, the local sportsman show, and dive shows around the country. The Council and sanctuary staff built a float for the Christmas Parade to promote the sanctuary and its sponsorship of a local musical, *The Christmas Schooner*. Council members assisted sanctuary staff at several presentations in the region. In recognition of the Council's volunteer efforts and service on the Council, the Sanctuary invited members for a sail aboard the tall ship the *Denis Sullivan*.

The Council established three new working groups in 2003: the Volunteer Working Group, the Retreat Working Group, and the NMSA Reauthorization Working Group. The Volunteer Working Group met with the National Volunteer Coordinator, Mary Enstrom, to brainstorm ideas for volunteer programs for Thunder Bay as well as the entire sanctuary program. The Volunteer Working Group is drafting a plan to present to the Sanctuary staff. The three other working groups that were established in 2002 (Education, Outreach, and Mooring Buoys) meet as needed. The working groups played a vital role in providing ideas and expertise to Sanctuary staff.

The Council held its second all-day retreat in April 2003. The goals of the retreat included Council members learning more about the sanctuary, refining the list of Council priorities, and brainstorming ideas for a sanctuary interpretive center. Members reached agreement on its most important roles and defined the Council's priorities for 2003-04. The priorities were based on the previous year's priorities, but were assigned to specific working groups to develop ways to achieve each goal. The priorities are to: 1) have a greater presence at community events and sanctuary presentations; 2) become involved in interpretive center planning; 3) become more knowledgeable about the sanctuary; 4) help create a program for oral history; and 5) help establish a friends' group.

In October 2003, Thunder Bay hosted the first Sanctuary Advisory Council Coordinators' training. Council coordinators from other sanctuaries attended the week-long training.

Council Recommendations and Sanctuary Decisions

The Council passed a resolution to support a full Coast Guard Station in Alpena. The Council sent a letter to the City of Alpena and the U.S. Coast Guard to that effect.

The Council instituted constituent reports as part of every meeting. Each council seat was assigned a meeting date to give a ten-minute report on its constituents' comments and concerns within the community regarding the sanctuary. The addition of this agenda item creates productive discussion among the members.

Major Administrative Changes

The Council had five seats up for selection this year (K-12 Education, Maritime History/ Interpretation, Tourism, Diving, and Citizen-at-Large). The sanctuary reselected each primary member and selected three new alternates. The Alpena County Board of Commissioners appointed a new member for their seat.

The Council voted to re-elect Carol Shafto to remain the Chair for the next two years. Ms. Shafto has been the Chair since 1997 when the Council was established during the sanctuary designation process.

Jean Prevo replaced Kate Thompson as the Advisory Council Coordinator.



